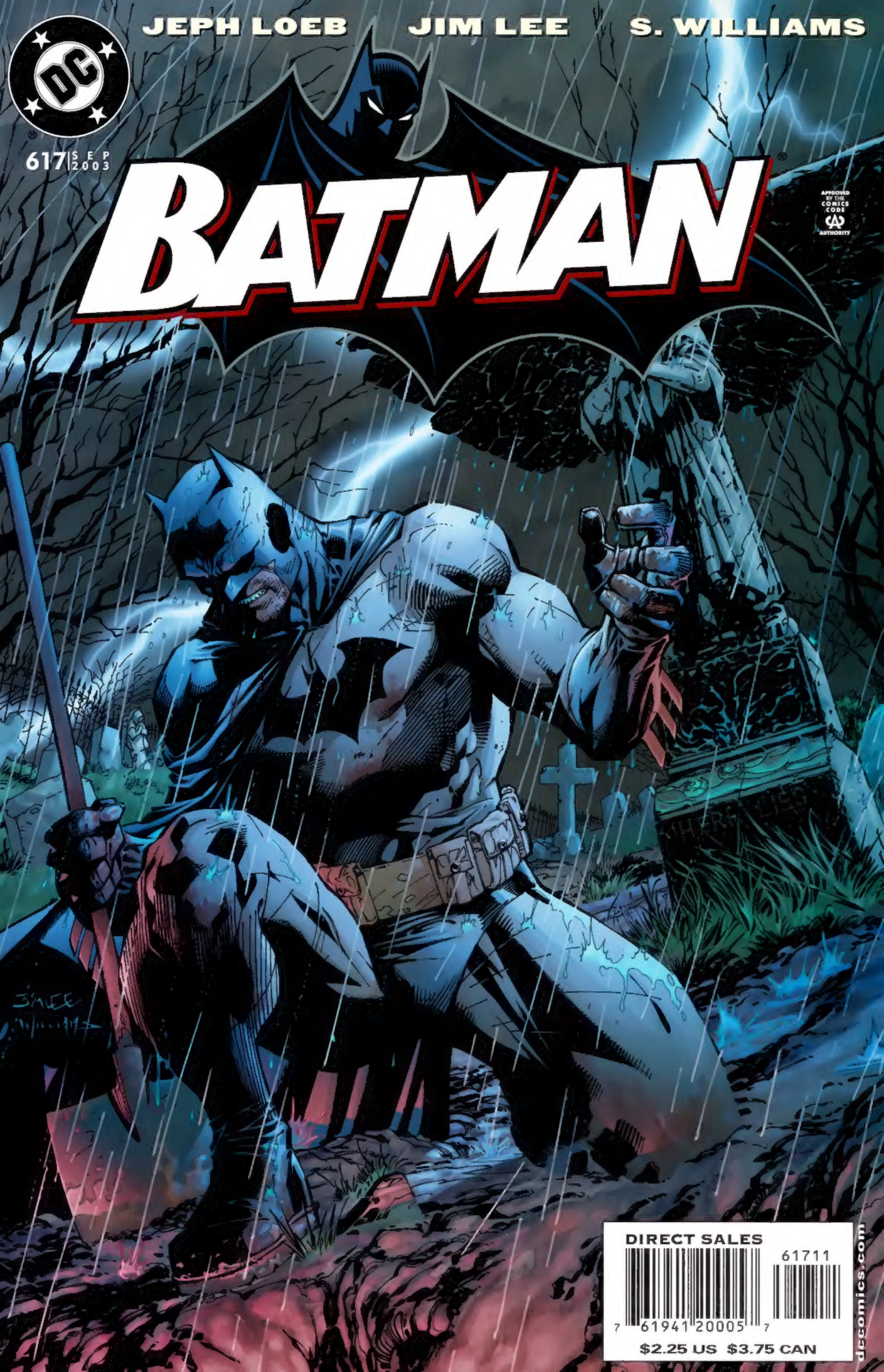
JEPH LOEB
JIM LEE
S. WILLIAMS
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BATMAN
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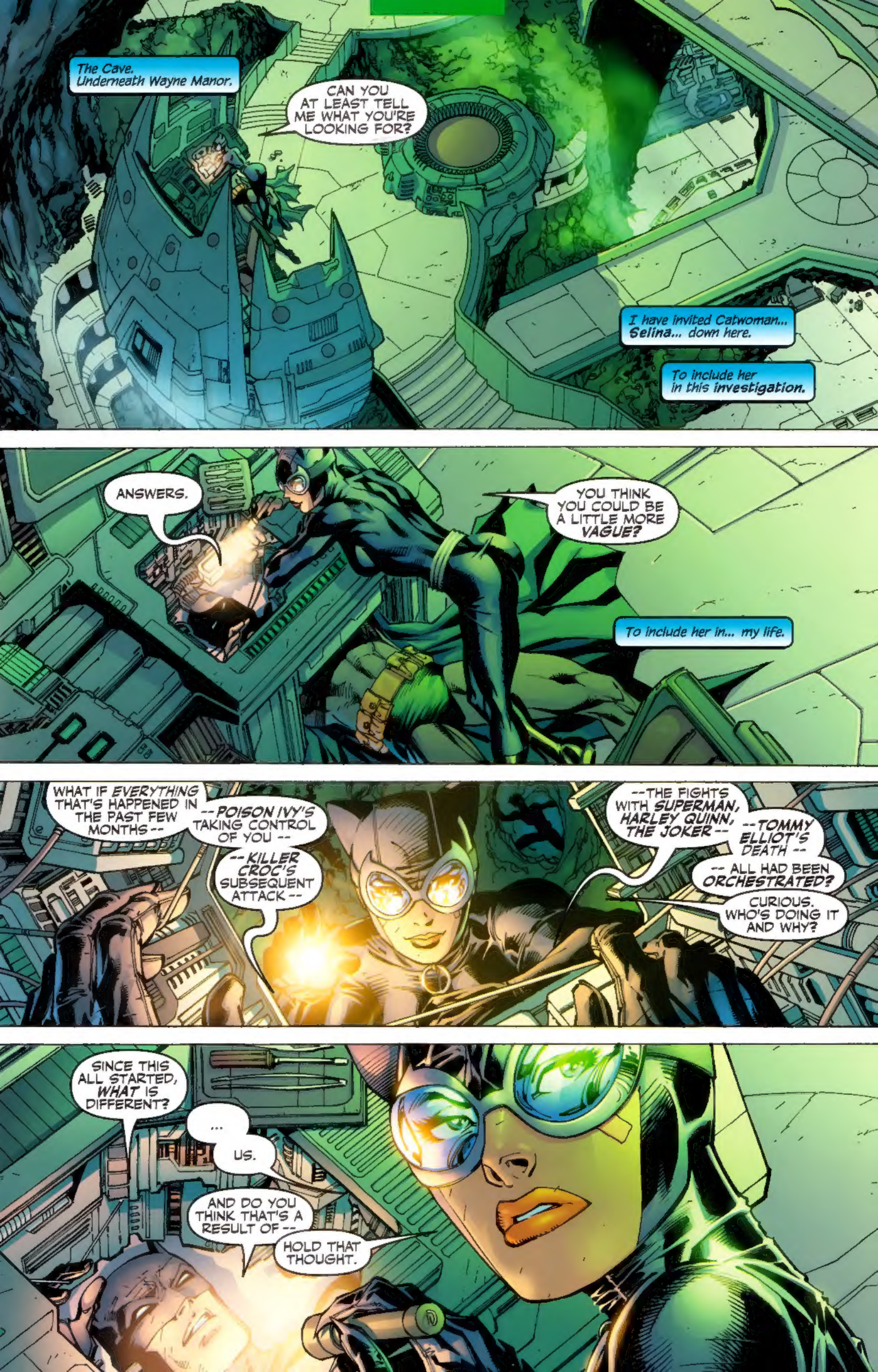
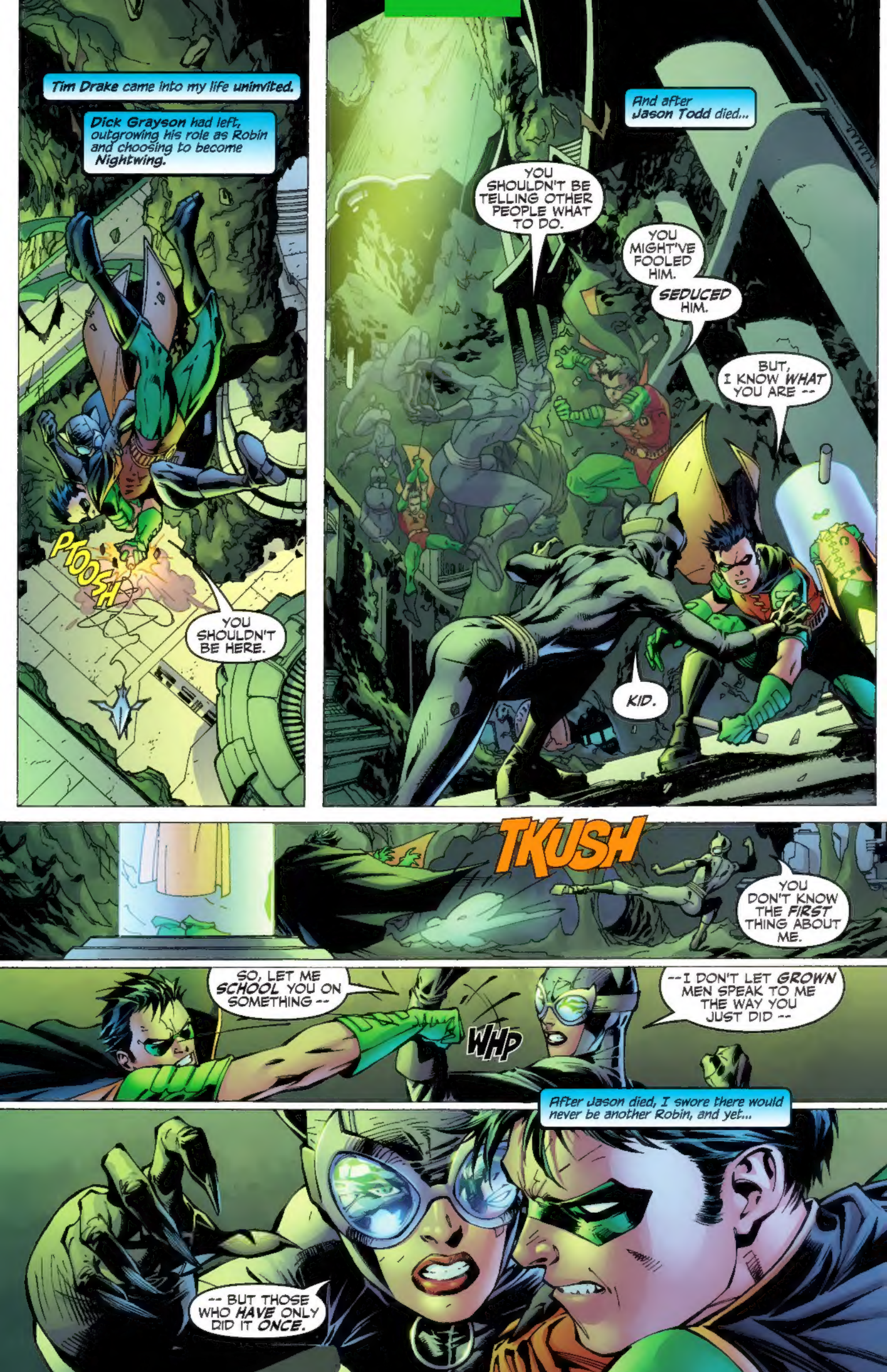

The Cave.
Underneath Wayne Manor.
CAN YOU AT LEAST TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?
I have invited Catwoman... Selina... down here.
To include her in this investigation.
ANSWERS.
YOU THINK YOU COULD BE A LITTLE MORE VAGUE?
To include her in... my life.
WHAT IF EVERYTHING THAT'S HAPPENED IN THE PAST FEW MONTHS --
--POISON IVY'S TAKING CONTROL OF YOU --
--KILLER CROC'S SUBSEQUENT ATTACK --
--THE FIGHTS WITH SUPERMAN, HARLEY QUINN, THE JOKER--
--TOMMY ELLIOT'S DEATH --
-- ALL HAD BEEN ORCHESTRATED?
CURIOUS. WHO'S DOING IT AND WHY?
SINCE THIS ALL STARTED, WHAT IS DIFFERENT?
...
US.
AND DO YOU THINK THAT'S A RESULT OF --
HOLD THAT THOUGHT.

Ra's al Ghul had a sword imbedded into this computer console.
At the time, I was focused on the sword itself and its meaning. It's placement appeared random other than to draw my attention.
WHY DON'T YOU COME OUT AND JOIN THE PARTY...?
In doing so, I may have neglected the first rule as a detective...
...nothing is random.
...ROBIN.
SKEE
SKEE
SKEE
MAYBE BECAUSE I WASN'T ASKED.
BUT I'LL BE HAPPY TO CRASH IT.
WAP
Admittedly, Catwoman has been a... distraction.
Is that what my opponent intended?


Tim Drake came into my life uninvited.
Dick Grayson had left, outgrowing his role as Robin and choosing to become Nightwing.
PTOOSH
YOU SHOULDN'T BE HERE.
And after Jason Todd died...
YOU SHOULDN'T BE TELLING OTHER PEOPLE WHAT TO DO.
YOU MIGHT'VE FOOLED HIM.
SEDUCED HIM.
BUT, I KNOW WHAT YOU ARE --
KID.
TKUSH
YOU DON'T KNOW THE FIRST THING ABOUT ME.
SO, LET ME SCHOOL YOU ON SOMETHING --
WHP
--I DON'T LET GROWN MEN SPEAK TO ME THE WAY YOU JUST DID --
After Jason died, I swore there would never be another Robin, and yet...
-- BUT THOSE WHO HAVE ONLY DID IT ONCE.

I made a promise on the grave of my parents to rid this city of the evil that took their lives. By day, I am Bruce Wayne, billionaire philanthropist. At night, criminals, a cowardly and superstitious lot, call me...
BATMAN
CREATED BY BOB KANE
HUSH
Chapter Ten
THE GRAVE
Jeph LOEB writes
Jim LEE pencils
ENOUGH.
Tim Drake is Robin, The Teen Wonder.
Scott WILLIAMS inks
Richard STARKINGS letters
Alex SINCLAIR colors
Bob SCHRECK edits
Michael WRIGHT associate edits
special thanks to Mark CHIARELLO

CALM DOWN.
DON'T TELL ME TO--
--THIS ISN'T A DISCUSSION.
Tim was something of an amateur detective. He had studied Batman. A boy with a hobby.
Jason had died. I was alone. Angry. Tim recognized that anger and decided to do something about it.
ROBIN.
SHE'S MY GUEST.
He managed to accomplish what few others have been able to do.
He deduced that Batman and Bruce Wayne were one and the same.
Furthermore, that Dick Grayson had been the original Robin.
SHE CAN'T BE TRUSTED.
THAT'S MY CHOICE.
LIKE THIS--
--WAS MY CHOICE.
YOU TOLD HER...?

Tim clung to a theory that Batman needs a Robin.
YOU GOT IT STRAIGHT NOW?
OR DO I HAVE TO DRAW YOU A PICTURE?
More than just for a legacy, but as a balance.
YOU SHOULD'VE--
I SHOULD HAVE WHAT?
CONSULTED YOU?
THIS WAS MY DECISION.
THEN, YOU MADE THE WRONG ONE.
IT WAS MINE TO MAKE.

I had taken both Dick and Jason in when they had no place else to go.
But Tim sought out the role. He wanted to be Robin.
And as hard as I tried to convince him otherwise, Tim worked for it.
R

STRINGS.
WHAT...?
I TOLD YOU. FOR A MAN WHO IS SUPPOSEDLY A LONER YOU'VE GOT AN AWFUL LOT OF STRINGS.
AND I'M NOT GOING TO BE THE ONE WHO TRIPS YOU--
--UP.
YOU COME AT ME ONE MORE TIME, LITTLE BIRD--
SKRAPK
--AND I'LL CLIP YOUR WINGS.
NO MATTER WHAT YOUR "DADDY" SAYS.
HE'S NOT MY FATHER.
TELL HIM THAT.
FWP

IT'S GETTING A LITTLE THICK IN HERE.
YOU SHOULD TRY AIRING THIS PLACE OUT EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE.
I'M BORROWING ONE OF YOUR MOTORCYCLES.
YOU CAN TAKE THE--

I WASN'T ASKING.
WHEN YOU'RE ALL THROUGH WITH YOUR TOY WONDER, YOU KNOW HOW TO FIND ME.
THROOM
SKRREEE

DO YOU THINK SHE BOUGHT IT?
THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY TO FIND OUT.
Dick saw being Robin as a thrill. It's probably why he outgrew it.
Jason saw being Robin as a game. It's probably what got him killed.
But... Tim...
I COULD'VE TAKEN HER, Y'KNOW.
TELL HER THAT.
...I have to hand it to the boy...
He wants to be the world's greatest detective. And from what I've seen so far...
...he will be someday.

I had told Tim about my decision to include Selina in my life...
...if for no other reason than I knew Dick would tell him and Tim should hear it from me.
VROOOOM
127 MPH
He was angry. Confused. And I had to remember how young he is and how long ago it was since I was his age.
If Tim has one character flaw, it's that he still sees the world in blacks and whites. Good and evil wear very different masks in his eyes.
SKREECH
HEY!
THROOM
HUNTRESS...?
FWUSSH
He's getting old enough to accept that there are "grays" in every situation. We may not like them, but it's part of what we do.
And my relationship with Catwoman is, at best, gray.
So... when Tim asked the obvious question, "Do you trust her?"--
LADY, YOU PICKED THE WRONG NIGHT TO PLAY GAMES WITH ME...
--I gave him the obvious answer.
"I wouldn't have told her I was Bruce Wayne unless I didn't."
SKRREEEKK

Three nights later, I came back to Tim and said I trusted him.
Whoever it is that is interfering in my life--
--who killed Tommy Elliot--
--is someone close. Someone who knows me. Has studied me.
And if my experience when I first met Tim still holds true--
--then it is possible this individual -- if it is one person -- has uncovered...
...Bruce Wayne is Batman.
WE DIDN'T KNOW.
"WE...?"
WHEN WE TOOK THE MONEY. FOR THE BIKE. THE EQUIPMENT. THE NEW UNIFORM.
WE CHECKED THE GUY OUT. HE WAS CLEAN. THE MONEY WAS CLEAN OR WE WOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN IT.
BUT... WHEN THEY KILLED HIM, I KNEW IT WAS ALL GOING TO UNRAVEL.
HUNTRESS. I DON'T HAVE THE SLIGHTEST IDEA WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT.
I SAVED HIS LIFE,
NOT THAT HE'D EVER THANK ME, BUT IF I HADN'T PUT HIM IN THE CAR...
I KNEW HE'D FIGURE OUT MY BEING NEAR CRIME ALLEY WAS TOO COINCIDENTAL.
THAT I'D BE THE FIRST ONE THERE.
I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU.
ARE YOU... ON SOMETHING?
I need to know...
I need to know if I made a mistake with Selina.

IT'S GOING TO GET WORSE BEFORE IT GETS BETTER!
SLAHK
HUNTRESS!
As Alfred would undoubtedly say, "The seeds of doubt grow bitter fruit."

SOMETHING HAS YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND.
SLIK
YOU CAN'T TAKE AWAY WHAT WE ARE NOW.
SLIK
FWAK
I'M TAKING YOU DOWN. BEFORE YOU HURT ANYBODY.
INCLUDING ME.
NO! WE CAN STOP THEM IF WE STOP FIGHTING.
FWAK
HUNTRESS. I'LL STOP FIGHTING WHEN YOU START MAKING SENSE.
WHY CAN'T YOU RECOGNIZE ME?
KLP
YOU'RE ME. YOU'RE WHAT I USED TO BE.
WHAT I CAN'T BE ANYMORE.
I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU!
KLP
I know now.
Catwoman can handle herself -- but if what I suspect has happened to Huntress is true...
... She may force Selina to kill her...

STAY HERE.
BUT--
DON'T ARGUE. I NEED A SECOND PAIR OF EYES.
WHAT AM I LOOKING FOR?
NOT WHAT... WHO.
OKAY WHO?!
ME.
PRETENDER
DOUSE HUNTRESS WITH THIS. IT WILL MAKE HER SLEEP.
FAP
WAIT A SECOND. HAVE YOU BEEN FOLLOWING ME?
GET READY TO MOVE--
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?!

Huntress' movements. Her speech pattern. Her obvious fear of something that is haunting her.
TALK TO ME, DAMMIT!
Only one person could have affected her mind in that way.
Jonathan Crane is The Scarecrow. Psychiatrist turned Psychopath.
HUSH, LITTLE BABY, DON'T SAY A WORD...
VROOOM
His involvement in tonight... in all of this... reveals a great deal.
...MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A MOCKINGBIRD.

AND IF THAT MOCKINGBIRD DON'T SING...
Crane has developed various fear toxins that invade the mind.
Depending on the severity of the dose, there can be no immediate antidote--
--other then time and sleep.
...MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A DIAMOND RING.
Scarecrow's control hangs on keeping his opponent off balance.
Rearranging reality.
But...it wasn't until now that I could be sure that all of this night was arranged...
WHAROOM

...to bring me here.
BAM
AND IF THAT DIAMOND RING TURNS BRASS, MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A LOOKING GLASS.
SNAP
PHOOSH
GAH!
AND IF THAT LOOKING GLASS GETS BROKE, MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A BILLY GOAT.
=>KOFF<=
=>KAFF<=
=>KOFF<=
This graveyard.
No one should know...
...who is buried here.
AND IF THAT BILLY GOAT WON'T PULL, MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A CART AND BULL.

AND IF THAT CART AND BULL TURN OVER, MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A DOG NAMED ROVER.
AND IF THAT DOG NAMED ROVER WON'T BARK, MAMA'S GOING TO BUY YOU A HORSE AND CART.
AND IF THAT HORSE AND CART FALL--
URK.
WHY?
RRRRIP
TELL ME.
MAMA'S GONNA BUY...
STOP IT. IT'S OVER.
I DON'T WANT TO TALK TO SCARECROW...
...I WANT DOCTOR JONATHAN CRANE.

YOU DID THE PROFILE WORK.
USED YOUR EXPERTISE AS A PSYCHIATRIST TO EXPLOIT WHAT THEY ALL WANTED.
THE JOKER. HARLEY QUINN. POISON IVY. KILLER CROC.
HUNTRESS.
CATWOMAN.
ME.
I...I DON'T UNDERSTAND. MY FEAR GAS SHOULD HAVE AFFECTED YOU.
UNLESS...
...YOUR MIND WAS ALREADY INFECTED BY ANOTHER--
VZPP
NNGGNNN
WHO...
FAP

The voice... muffled by the bandages... hidden in the wind...
YOU CARE ABOUT THIS... IMPOSTOR...
...PRETENDER...
LET THE BOY GO.
WHY? WHY SHOULD I GIVE HIM THE CHANCE YOU NEVER GAVE ME?
WHO ARE YOU?
THE WORLD'S GREATEST DETECTIVE AND YOU STILL HAVEN'T FIGURED IT OUT?
SHLKK
This place is... was a secret. We... Alfred and I had the body moved here so no one could find it.
Defile it.
LIFE'S JUST A GAME, BATMAN...

...AND THIS TIME, YOU LOSE.
Jason Todd became Robin after Dick Grayson.
Hoping to harness the rage that had driven him throughout his life, I taught him how to fight.
He knows all my secrets.
...and he has been dead for years...
Next: BATMAN vs ROBIN

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This Month's Cover by...
JIM LEE AND SCOTT WILLIAMS,
COLORS BY ALEX SINCLAIR.

Next Month in...

Batman #618

As we near the pulse-pounding finale of "Hush," Batman draws closer to the ultimate secret of this year's most intriguing mystery. By Loeb, Lee and Williams.

"Azzarello and Risso take Batman down the darkest alleys of his mind."
— BATMAN Editor Bob Schreck

TAKING AIM AT BATMAN®

BATMAN #620

100 BULLETS top guns Brian Azzarello and Eduardo Risso set their sights on the legend of the Dark Knight when they begin a landmark six-month run on BATMAN. Solving the murder of a child's parents forces Batman to revisit the tragic night that created him, where the most shocking discovery of all awaits. The mystery behind the mythos unravels in BATMAN #620 this October.

The Hot List THIS MONTH

FORMERLY KNOWN AS THE JUSTICE LEAGUE #1 OF 6

This new miniseries by Keith Giffen, J.M. DeMatteis, Kevin Maguire and Joe Rubinstein reunites the creative team behind the classic '80s JUSTICE LEAGUE!

SUPERMAN: BIRTHRIGHT #1 OF 12

Mark Waid returns to DC as Leinil Yu makes his DCU debut! Everyone knows Jor-El sent his infant son to Earth to avoid death on Krypton...this story takes a closer look at Jor-El's emotional struggles with the decision.

TEEN TITANS #1

DC's hottest new super-team debuts, featuring guest appearances by Superman, Batman, The Flash, and Jay Garrick! What do teenaged super-heroes do on the weekends? They hang with the Teen Titans!

EMPIRE #1

Mark Waid, Barry Kitson, and James Pascoe continue the Empire saga with a bold new start! The unstoppable tyrant Golgoth and his conquering armies have eradicated every significant military force on Earth, bringing the world into the grasp of a dictator.

PROS & CONS

Pack up your sketchbook – this summer DC dominates the convention circuit, starting with the Comic-Con International held inside the San Diego Convention Center July 17-20. With over 63,000 attendees in 2002, expect an even bigger and better show this year, yet when you consider the scheduled lineup we're bringing to this party – 100 BULLETS' **Brian Azzarello** and **Eduardo Risso**, **Ed Brubaker** (CATWOMAN), **Mike Carey** (LUCIFER), GOTHAM CENTRAL's **Michael Lark**, **Geoff Johns** and **Mike McKone** (TEEN TITANS), **Judd Winick** of OUTSIDERS, HAWKMAN's **Rags Morales**, **Kevin O'Neill** (LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN), **Carlos Pacheco**, **Jimmy Palmiotti**, **Jill Thompson**, and FABLES' **Bill Willingham** – there's really only one booth worth visiting. Stop by and say hi! Comic-Con International is also the home of the prestigious **Will Eisner Awards**, and who else but yours truly leads the pack of publishers with 23 nominations? **Bill Willingham's** FABLES capped off a storybook year for Vertigo, garnering the most nods with four (Best New and Continuing Series, Best Serialized Story and Best Writer), while GOTHAM CENTRAL earned Best Writer nominations for both **Ed Brubaker** and **Greg Rucka**, plus Best Penciller/Inker for **Michael Lark**. Lark shares the nomination for his work on BATMAN: NINE LIVES, which is also up for Best Publication Design and Best Coloring by **Matt Hollingsworth**. Other multi-nominated DC titles include THE LEAGUE OF EXTRAORDINARY GENTLEMEN, VOL. 2 (Best Limited Series, Best Penciller/Inker for **Kevin O'Neill**); PROMETHEA (Best Penciller/Inker and Cover Artist for **J. H. Williams III** and **Mick Gray**, Best Coloring for **Jeromy Cox**); and last year's big winner, 100 BULLETS, which added two more notches to its extra-large belt with nods for Best Coloring (**Patricia Mulvihill**) and Cover Artist (SUPERMAN: RED SON's **Dave Johnson**). Even though the winners will be announced July 18, allow us to congratulate one and all here and now!

To get more of DC in Demand's Inside Scoop, go to www.dccomics.com/dcindemand right now!

Once you've soaked up that California sun, we recommend joining the DCU Crew in the Windy City August 8-10 for WizardWorld Chicago. Among our legion of super-creators scheduled to appear are WizardWorld Guest of Honor **Jim Lee**, **Geoff Johns**, **Judd Winick**, **Lee Bermejo**, and **Ed McGuinness**, who's hard at work on the upcoming SUPERMAN/BATMAN monthly out this September! (Please note that due to forces beyond our control, convention guest lists are always subject to change!)

MOLE

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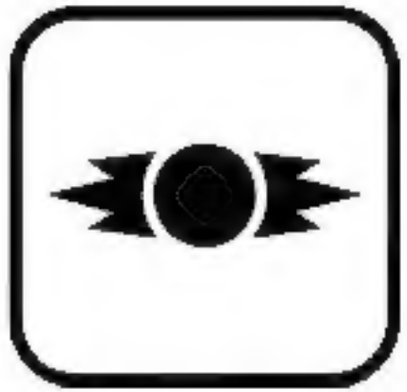

MINUTEMEN
SCANS